

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS COMMUNITY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON JULY 19, 2016
FROM:	JOHN BRAAM, P. ENG. MANAGING DIRECTOR, ENVIRONMENTAL & ENGINEERING SERVICES AND CITY ENGINEER
SUBJECT:	HUMANE URBAN WILDLIFE CONFLICT POLICY: FORESTRY OPERATIONS WILDLIFE PROTOCOL

RECOMMENDATION

That on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Environmental and Engineering Services and City Engineer, the following action **BE TAKEN** with respect to the Humane Urban Wildlife Conflict Policy:

- (a) the draft Humane Urban Wildlife Conflict Policy: Forestry Operations Wildlife Protocol **BE RECEIVED** for information;
- (b) the draft Humane Urban Wildlife Conflict Policy: Forestry Operations Wildlife Protocol **BE REFERRED** to the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee and the Trees and Forests Advisory Committee for review and comment; and
- (c) the implications of the operational protocols **BE MONITORED** to determine potential impacts on operational efficiencies and program elements related to the Implementation Plan of the Urban Forest Strategy.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER

Community and Protective Services Committee– November 17, 2014 –Humane Urban Wildlife Conflict Policy

Community and Protective Services Committee– March 24, 2015 –Humane Urban Wildlife Conflict Policy: Beaver Policy

2015-19 STRATEGIC PLAN

The proposed Humane Urban Wildlife Conflict Policy: Forestry Operations Wildlife Protocol supports Strategic Plan through the strategic focus area of *Building a Sustainable City* by managing our infrastructure and supporting a Strong and Healthy environment through the protection of the natural environment.

BACKGROUND

The City of London Strategic Plan stresses the importance of a caring and compassionate

public services. Referenced in the plan is the Humane Wildlife Conflict Policy which is the corner stone for the compassionate care of wildlife in our community.

Municipal Council, at its meeting held on October 27, 2015 resolved:

10. That the following actions be taken with respect to the 6th Report of the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (AWAC) from its meeting held on October 1, 2015:

a) clause 7, related to tree trimming and wildlife displacement, BE REFERRED to the Civic Administration to review and develop a Forestry Operation Protocol related to wildlife, including further consultation with the AWAC; it being noted that the Community and Protective Services Committee (CPSC) heard a verbal delegation from F. Morrison and M. Blosch, and received a communication dated August 29, 2015, from B. Salt, Director of Wildlife Rehabilitation Salthaven Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Centre Inc., with respect to this matter; and,

b) clauses 1 to 6, BE RECEIVED; (10/11/CPSC) (AS AMENDED)

In May 2015, staff met with representatives of AWAC and interested parties to discuss tree wildlife in the City of London. Extensive and valuable information was exchanged and used as a basis for the development of the policy.

Additional research and information was gathered from other municipalities, specifically Ottawa and Oakville, in order to develop a wildlife protocol for Forestry Operations.

The City of London manages and maintains approximately 1,026,600 (*Infrastructure report 2013*) trees on public property of which 121,600 are considered 'street trees' that require more frequent care. These trees are predominately situated within the urban environment where they are valued for their contribution to green infrastructure, ecosystem services, visual amenity and potential to provide habitat for wildlife. The City of London recognizes that just as trees may be protected through bylaw or heritage designation, the wildlife that may utilize trees for reasons such as feeding, roosting, breeding or sheltering may also be afforded legislative protection; the City is fully aware of its obligations and appreciates the potential detrimental impact that its forestry operations could have on wildlife.

Street trees are important for a variety of urban bird wildlife such as songbirds, perching birds, raptors as well as for the ubiquitous urban species such as crows, pigeons and gulls. Terrestrial species encountered in street trees include squirrels, bats, raccoons as well as a variety of insects and arthropods at various stages of development.

City and contracted forestry crews are led by certified arborists. Additionally, a number of the staff that have attained a higher level of *Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ)*. This qualification promotes the safety of people and property by providing a standardized and systematic process for assessing tree risk. The results of a tree risk assessment can provide tree owners and risk managers with the information to make informed decisions to enhance tree benefits, health, and longevity.

Forestry Operations is in discussions with a third party training facilitator to develop a specialized training course to compliment this protocol.

CONCLUSIONS

The implementation of the Forestry Operations Wildlife Protocol will allow for the establishment of appropriate measures that comply with provincial and federal acts and regulations, balance public safety risks and a healthy ecological environment, all within an urban setting.

This protocol will be reconsidered and brought back to the Community and Protective Services Committee by the end of 2018 following implementation and training. Going forward, any significant changes to the protocol will be reported back to the various stakeholders as required

SUBMITTED BY:	REVIEWED AND CONCURRED BY:
JOHN PARSONS DIVISION MANAGER, TRANSPORTATION AND ROADSIDE OPERATIONS	EDWARD SOLDO, P.ENG. DIRECTOR, ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION
RECOMMENDED BY:	
JOHN BRAAM, P.ENG. MANAGING DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL & ENGINEERING SERVICES AND CITY ENGINEER	

Attach: Appendix "A" – Humane Urban Wildlife Conflict Policy: Forestry Operations Wildlife Protocol

cc: Chair and Members, Animal Welfare Advisory Committee
 Chair and Members, Trees and Forests Advisory Committee
 Ivan Listar, Manager – Urban Forestry

Appendix "A"

Humane Urban Wildlife Conflict Policy: Forestry Operations Wildlife Protocol

HUMANE URBAN WILDLIFE CONFLICT POLICY: FORESTRY OPERATIONS WILDLIFE PROTOCOL

June 2016

City of London

Version: 1.0

Why have a protocol?

To successfully implement the City's Humane Urban Wildlife Conflict Policy. Specific protocols are required to address potential human wildlife conflicts. This protocol will allow for tree care and to mitigate risk to property, people and the environment while balancing the various needs of wildlife inhabitants in trees.



Primary Goals of the Protocol

The protocol attempts to balance the following goals:

- Respect and protect wildlife in their natural habitat;
- Protect critical infrastructure;
- Protect people and property and mitigate risk.

Protocol

After conducting a visual inspection of the tree is there a net negative impact on the "Primary Goals"?

If No: No direct action required – proceed with work.

If Yes:

- 1) In cases where wildlife is visually present following an inspection but the tree needs pruning or removal, staff will cease work until nesting period is over and the wildlife has left.
- 2) In cases where wildlife is visually present following an inspection but the tree is assessed as an immediate risk, staff will report the conditions to the Forestry Supervisor.
- 3) Following step 2 if the work cannot be delayed. Pre-stressing will be used to encourage wildlife to leave the site.

Governing Principle

Generally, the safest and most operationally feasible method for managing wildlife in trees is to leave a mixture of live and dead standing trees in clumped distribution. Tree health care depends on an active pruning cycle. Boulevard or 'Street trees' require additional attention because of their proximity to public and private infrastructure.

Humane Urban Wildlife Conflict Policy: Forestry Operations Wildlife Protocol

Commonly Encountered Species known to nest in trees

<u>TIME OF YEAR</u>	RISK OF ENCOUNTERING NESTING BIRDS	ACTION BY ARBORIST
September to March	LOW	Unlikely that nesting birds will be encountered, however, should this happen work to be stopped on the subject tree and Supervisor to be notified.
Mid April and Late August	MODERATE	Complete site specific risk assessment, work as normal but be aware of increased risk of nesting birds. If encountered, stop and notify Supervisor.
May -July	HIGH	Complete site specific risk assessment it should be anticipated that birds will be nesting during this period, be vigilant during operations and when nesting birds are encountered stop all works on the subject tree and notify Supervisor.

<u>TIME OF YEAR</u>	Risk of encountering nesting Squirrels	ACTION BY ARBORIST
January—February July-August	MODERATE	Complete site specific risk assessment, work as normal but be aware of increased risk of nesting squirrels. If encountered, stop and notify Supervisor.

Continuous Improvement

The protocol will be reconsidered and brought back to Council by the end of 2018 following implementation and training. Going forward, any significant changes to the protocol will be reported back to the various stakeholders and Council prior to implementation.

Contacts

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Forestry Dispatch

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